

**ADVANCING THE PLAINS:
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BROOKINGS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



**Sociology 740: Rural Community Development
Graduate Seminar
FALL 2013**



South Dakota State University
Department of Sociology & Rural Studies

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3. Introduction and Timeline of Activities

This is a report produced by South Dakota State University graduate students in the Fall 2013 graduate seminar SOC:740 Rural Community Development.

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Timeline of Activities:

September 3rd, 2013 - Planning Board Meeting, Brookings, SD.

September 4th, 2013 - Van Tour of Brookings County

November 6th, 2013 - Meeting with Planning Personnel

November 7th, 2013 - Volga "Munch, Mingle and Plan" Meeting

November 14th, 2013 - White "Munch, Mingle and Plan" Meeting

November 19th, 2013 - Elkton "Munch, Mingle and Plan" Meeting

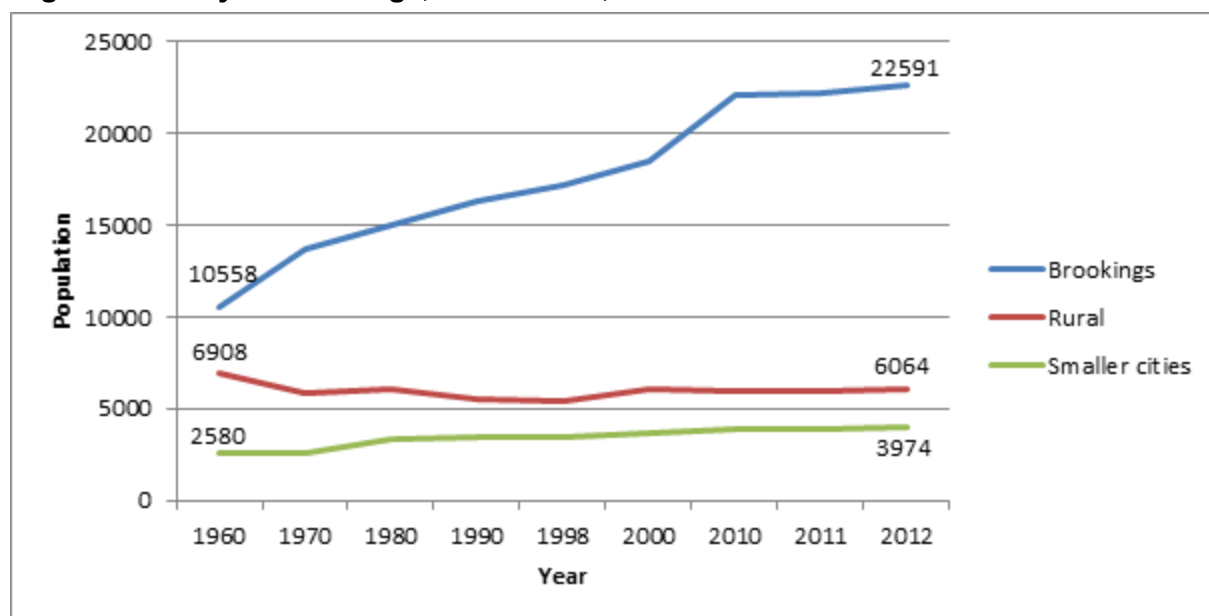
November 21st, 2013 - Brookings "Munch, Mingle and Plan" Meeting

4. Demographic Trends

a. Population

Brookings and its surrounding communities have experienced demographic changes since the 1990s and can expect more in the coming decades. To adapt to these changes, the county must develop an updated comprehensive plan that addresses the needs of the people who call our region home. Demography -- the study of population -- is a key part of this planning process. This demographic study must take into account the county's net migration rate, age distribution, and birthrate and deathrate. Figure 4.1 shows that the population trend for the county has been increasing at an annual rate of 1.07% or 32.2% over the past 50 years.

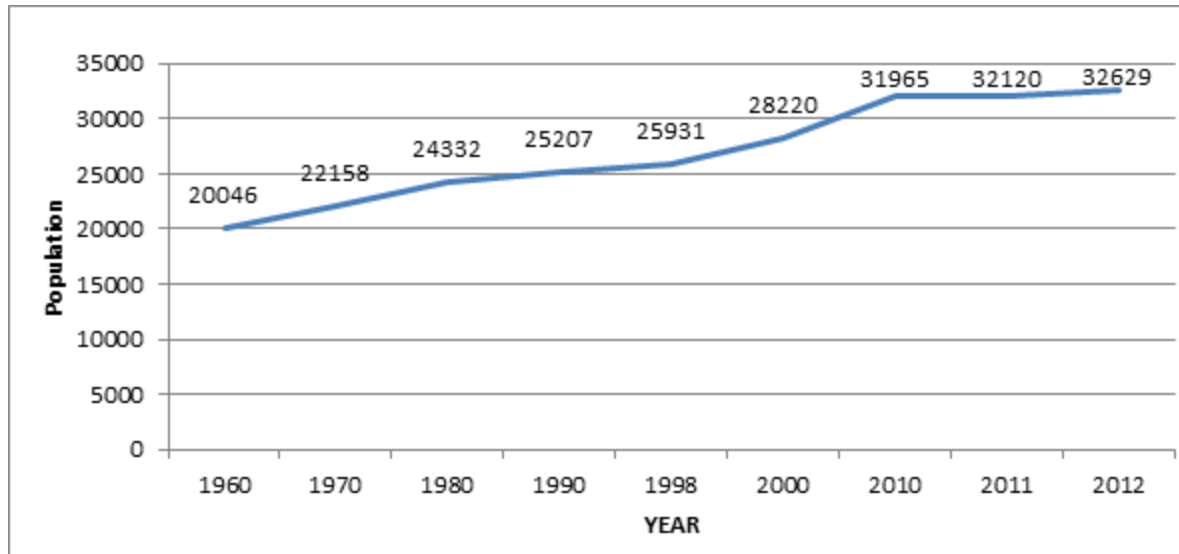
Figure 4.1: City of Brookings, Rural Areas, and Smaller Cities



Source:: US Bureau of Census of the Population 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 1998, 2000, 2010, and 2012 Population Estimates South Dakota State Data Center.

The population trends are further detailed in both Table 4.1 and Figure 4.2. This was done by dividing the county into three subsets: Brookings, rural areas, and smaller cities. These smaller cities include Aurora, Bruce, Bushnell, Elkton, Sinai, Volga, and White.

Figure 4.2: Brookings County Population Trends 1960 - 2012



Source: US Bureau of Census of the Population 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 1998, 2000, 2010, and 2012 Population Estimates South Dakota State Data Center.

According to the 2000 Census, Brookings County's population was 28,220. As shown in Table 4.1 below, the 2010 census population of Brookings County was 31,639, which is an 11% increase since 2000.

Table 4.1: Brookings County Population History, 1960-2012

Census Year	Brookings	Rural	Smaller Cities	Total County
1960	10,558	6,908	2,580	20,046
1970	13,717	5,834	2,607	22,158
1980	14,951	6,088	3,293	24,332
1990	16,270	5,481	3,456	25,207
1998	17,138	5,448	3,403	25,989
2000	18,504	6,094	3,622	28,220
2010	22,056	5,999	3,910	31,965
2011	22,228	5,971	3,921	32,120
2012	22,591	6,064	3,974	32,629

The smaller cities population for 1980-2012 included Aurora, Bruce, Bushnell, Elkton, Sinai, Volga, and White.

Table 4.2 demonstrates that the outlying municipalities are largely not expected to significantly contribute to the increase in population. Some of the nine municipalities' and 23 townships' populations are in decline. The municipalities of Aurora, Bruce, Bushnell, Sinai, and White have witnessed a steadily decline over the past decade. In addition, Brookings' population became a larger share of the county's population over the past 10 years, increasing from 65.5% in 2000 to 69.0% in 2010. Table 4.2 demonstrates that the city of Brookings, whose change in proportion has increased by 3.5%, is poised to become a major migration pull center.

Table 4.2: Brookings County Population Analysis 1980 – 1998

	Population 2000	Proportion of Brookings County 2000	Population 2010	Proportion of Brookings County 2010	Change in Proportion 2000-2010
Brookings	18,504	65.5	22,056	69.0	+3.5
Aurora	500	1.8	532	1.7	-0.1
Bruce	272	0.9	204	0.6	-0.3
Bushnell	75	0.3	65	0.2	-0.1
Elkton	677	2.4	736	2.3	-0.1
Sinai	133	0.5	120	0.4	-0.1
Volga	1,435	5.1	1,768	5.5	+0.4
White	530	1.9	485	1.5	-0.4
Rural	6,094	21.6	5,999	18.8	-2.8
Total	28,220		31,965		

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census,, Census of the Population 2000- 2010.

Between 1980 and 2010, Brookings and the surrounding population have grown in proportion. In 1980, the city of Brookings represented 65.5% of the population. By 2010, that number has increased to 69.0% and the rate is expected to grow more than 5% from approximately 31,965 to 32,825 residents, an increase of around 860 people. Historically, growth sometimes happens in outlying areas of the region, leaving communities unable to adapt to the changing climate. Instead, growth is concentrated in the city proper which, without careful planning, can strain and potentially put at risk the existing capacity.

Figure 4.3: city vs. rural (township) population for Brookings County, SD* through 2035.



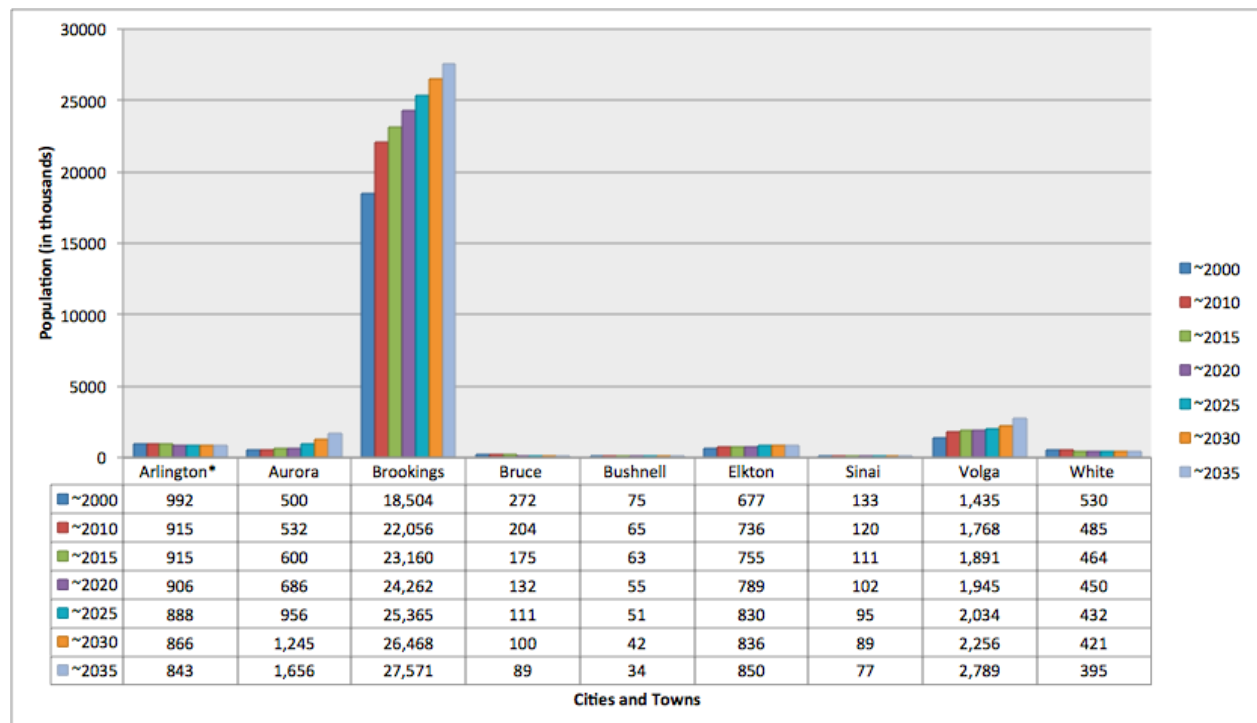
Source: South Dakota State University Census Data Center, *Population and Population Change* (2013)

*The town of Arlington is partially in Kingsbury County; its entire population is counted in the "Cities and Towns" category.

** Townships are included in "Rural"

Most of the projected future growth in Brookings County is expected to be concentrated in its cities, Brookings, Volga, Aurora, and Elkton. Growth is also expected to occur within Brookings, Aurora, and Medary townships. All other areas in Brookings County are expected to lose population between 2013 and 2035 (see Figure 4.5).

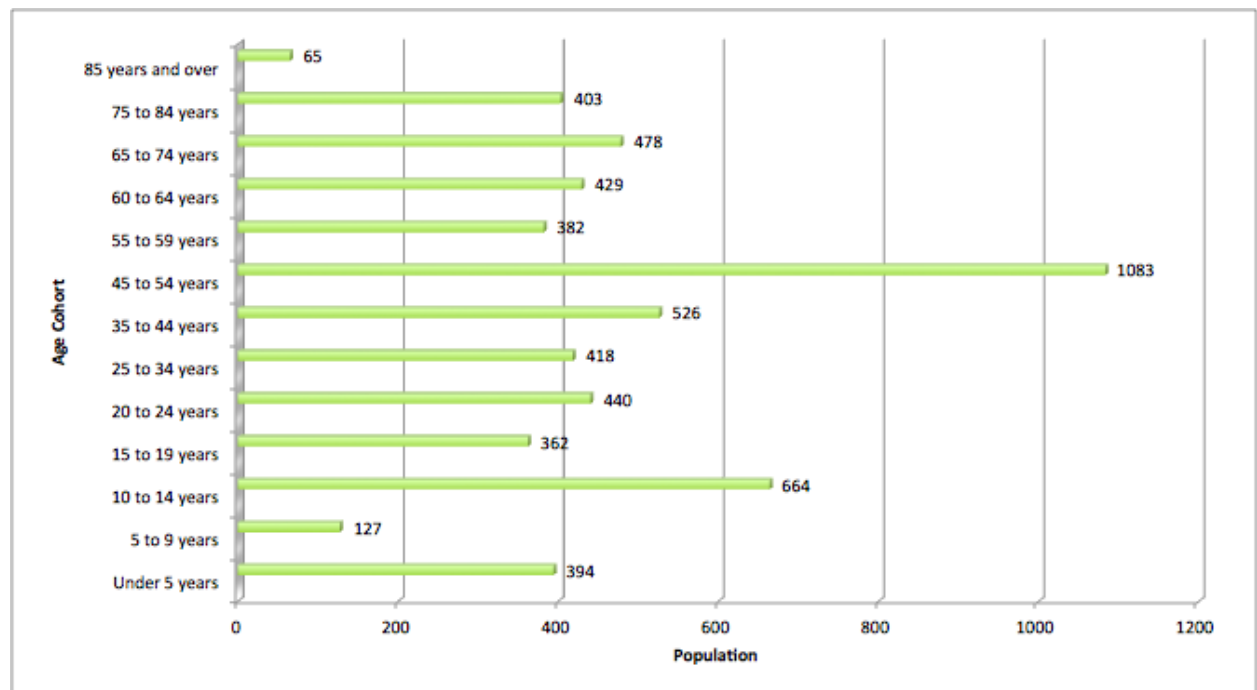
Figure 4.4 - Population for Brookings County, SD* cities, 2000-2035



Source: South Dakota State University Census Data Center, *Population and Population Change* (2013)

*The town of Arlington is partially in Kingsbury County; its entire population is counted in the "Cities and Towns" category.

Figure 4.5 -- Age Demographics for Unincorporated Brookings County (As of 2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *American FactFinder: 2010 Census Data* (2013)

Although Brookings County's population as a whole is younger than the national average due to the presence of South Dakota State University (United States Census Bureau 2010), the same does not hold for the unincorporated (outside of city limits) areas of the county. This section of the county has age demographics in line with those of the rest of rural South Dakota: with a small population of young adults and a large number of middle-aged and elderly residents. This means that the Brookings County government must plan for the impact of an aging rural population, an increasingly small number of working adults, and the eventual decline of farming activities within the region.

All in all, the face of Brookings County is expected to change over the next few decades. As the population in unincorporated parts of the county continues to decline (due to age and outmigration) and large-scale farms become carved up to support suburban-style development, the county faces challenges in creating land use policies that ensure the interests of rural farmers and current landowners are protected.

b. Employment

As of 2011, there are 18,428 individuals in the labor force, with 17,015 (up from 14,789 in 2002) jobs in Brookings County are provided by 1,003 establishments.

Table 4.4: Jobs Provided by Industries* in Brookings County in the year 2011

Industry	Number of Employees (2011)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (includes farming, hunting, fishing, and trapping)	290
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	50
Utilities	264
Construction	687
Manufacturing (production of value-added goods from raw materials and processing)	4,370
Wholesale Trade	389
Retail Trade	1,541
Transportation and Warehousing	275
Information	160

Finance and Insurance	370
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	165
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	449
Management of Companies and Enterprises	140
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	209
Educational Services	3,339
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,404
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	326
Accommodation and Food Services	1,696
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	410
Public Administration	481

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2013)

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, manufacturing is defined as:

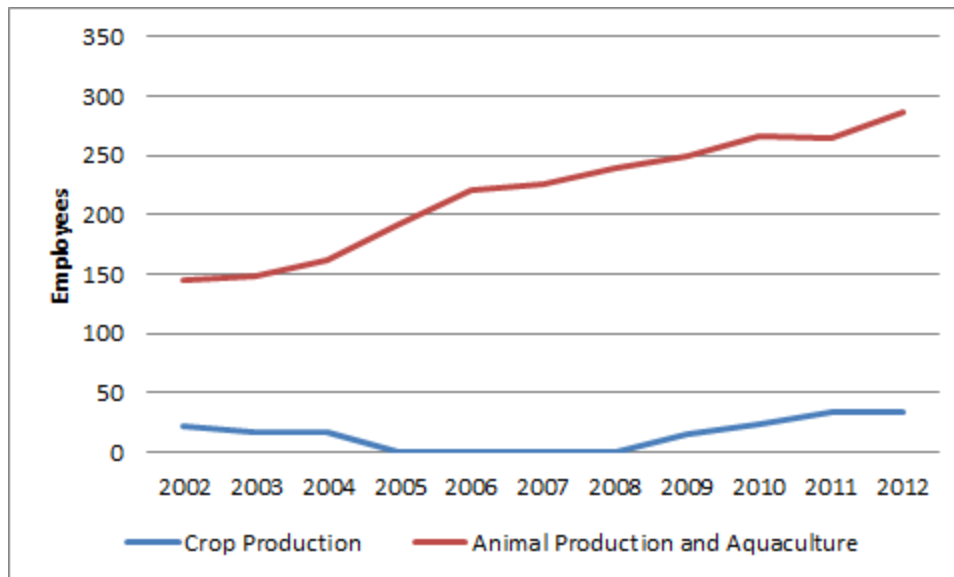
The manufacturing sector comprises establishments engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products. Establishments in the manufacturing sector are often described as plants, factories, or mills and characteristically use power-driven machines and materials-handling equipment. However, establishments that transform materials or substances into new products by hand or in the worker's home and those engaged in selling to the general public products made on the same premises from which they are sold, such as bakeries, candy stores, and custom tailors, may also be included in this sector. Manufacturing establishments may process materials or may contract with other establishments to process their materials for them. Both types of establishments are included in manufacturing (North American Industry Classification Industry, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013).

While the manufacturing industry definition is closely linked to agricultural practices, the agriculture industry falls into the broader category of agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. This industry is defined as:

Directly supervise and coordinate the activities of agricultural, forestry, fishing, and related workers. May supervise helpers assigned to these workers. Managers/Supervisors are generally found in smaller establishments where they perform both supervisory and management functions, such as accounting, marketing, and personnel work, and may also engage in the same work as the workers they supervise. Exclude work leaders who spend 20 percent or more of their time at tasks similar to those of the employees under their supervision and report them in the occupations which are most closely related to their specific work duties (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013).

Under the agricultural, forestry, fishing, and hunting classification is a subset of three categories that pertain to agriculture including crop production, animal and aquaculture production, and agriculture and forestry support activities. Data on the years 2005 through 2008 is unavailable due to the failure to meet BLS and State agency standards. The figure below indicates that there has been an increase in employees of crop production since 2002, as well as a steady increase in employees of animal and aquaculture production. There are substantially more employees in the animal and aquaculture production than in crop production. This may be due to the nature of the work regarding crop production and animal and aquaculture production in relation to number of employees needed. The 2012 BLS total number of employees in agriculture is listed as 319. This number excludes agriculture and forestry support activities as there is no data available from the BLS or Census. The 319 total employees listed in Agriculture is up compared to the 2011 Census number of 290. However, there is some discrepancy between the BLS 2011 agriculture employee number of 298 and the Census count of 290.

Figure 4.6: Employees In Agriculture



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013

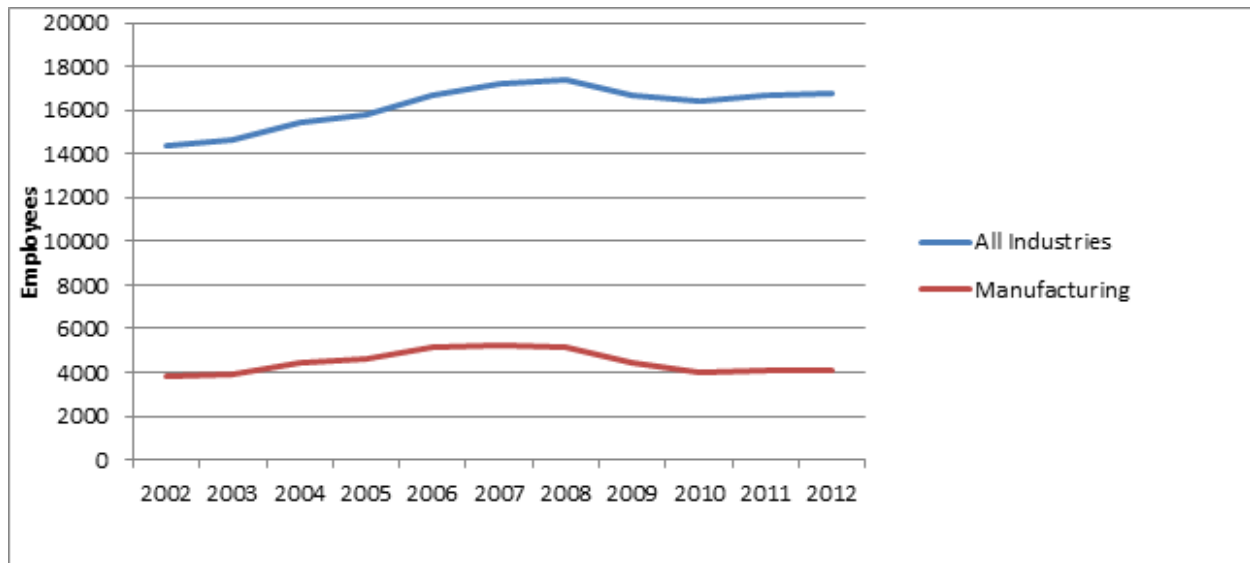
Industries providing the most jobs in the county include manufacturing (25.7%), education services (19.6%), and accommodation and food services (10%) (Census 2011). The number of establishments has been increasing over the last 10 years, with the biggest jump being in 2007. Manufacturing jobs have been varied the last ten years, with moderate gains from 2003 to 2007. From 2007 to 2010, the manufacturing industry went down from its peak of 5,269 jobs to 3,967 jobs. Currently, the projected amount of manufacturing jobs for 2012 was 4,095. Although manufacturing provides most of the jobs for Brookings County, the largest number of employing entities has been retail with 118 establishments (American Community Survey). According to the census, only 9.1% of the jobs in the county are from this industry.

Although the agricultural sector is underrepresented in the aforementioned statistics, it is nonetheless culturally important to the people of Brookings County, especially those who reside in the county's unincorporated areas. Although many residents consider the county to be an "agricultural region," agriculture in the county employed just shy of 300 workers in the year 2011, far fewer than, for instance, the manufacturing and retail sectors. However, concerning the rural areas of the county, agriculture is still by far the largest economic activity, as the vast majority of employers in the manufacturing, retail, public administration, and other fields are located within city limits, outside of Brookings County's distribution. Therefore, the main efforts of the county should concentrate on maintaining land use policies designed to protect agricultural activity from suburban sprawl, improving rural roads to allow farmers and ranchers to easily transport their goods to markets, and educating rural residents about the economic and employment opportunities available within the agricultural sector.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate is at 3.8%, which is down from 2011 when it hit 4.2% and even more so from 2010 when it reached 4.5%, a 10 year high. In the last 10 years, the lowest unemployment rate was in 2007 where we also have seen a peak in manufacturing jobs available.

Brookings County's workforce was at a 10 year high in 2008 with 17,387 total employees until a decrease of 4% occurred in 2009 and an additional 0.4% in 2010. Aligned with the manufacturing industry, a turnaround began in 2011 when a 1.8% increase occurred and a .3% projected increase for 2012. Currently, our labor force is still recovering from the 2010 drop and our unemployment rate is shrinking from the 2010 high. This corresponds to the trends we see in the manufacturing industry. The influence of the manufacturing industry can be seen between the years 2008 to 2010 when the total number of manufacturing employees in Brookings County dropped by 1,225 employees and the total number of employees in all industries decreased by 948.

Figure 4.7: Employees in Brookings County



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013

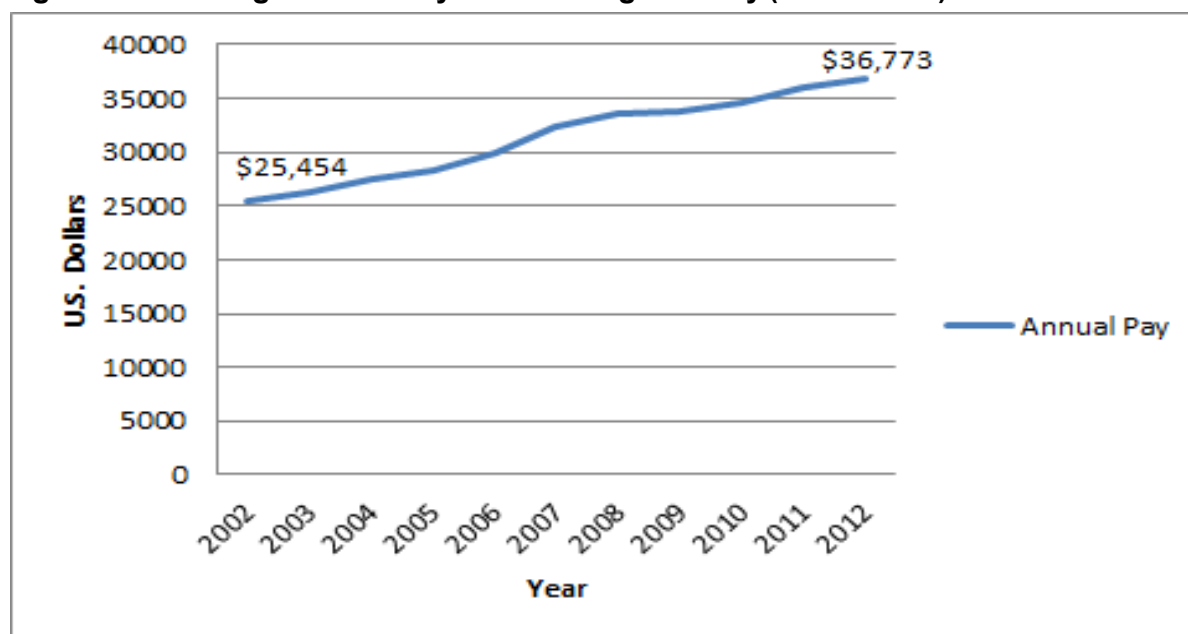
Table 4.5: Employee Totals 2008 - 2010

Year	Employees in all industries	Employees in Manufacturing
2008	17,387	5,192
2009	16,684	4,406
2010	16,439	3,967

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013

The average annual pay for 2012 is at \$36,773, up from 2011 when it was at \$35,925 (Bureau of Labor Statistics). Since 2001, there has been a gradual increase in annual pay with the largest jump from 2006 to 2007 with an 8.3% increase. It slowed dramatically after that, with a 4.1% increase in 2008 and a .4% increase in 2009.

Figure 4.8: Average Annual Pay for Brookings County (2002 – 2012)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013

Table 4.5: Projected Workforce Numbers for South Dakota

Industry	Number of New Workers for 2020	Average Annual Pay
Ambulatory Health Care Services	4,190	\$46,644
Food Services	3,005	\$10,847
Education Services	2,605	N/A
Credit Intermediation	2,340	\$44,629
Nursing and Residential Care	1,940	N/A
Hospitals	2,430	N/A
Manufacturing	3,195	\$48,453

Source: U.S. Census 2013

Employment trends suggest that manufacturing can once again experience a growth in Brookings County and has the ability (or has had the ability) to provide a large number of jobs. Being the backbone of the county's workforce, the manufacturing industry needs to remain strong and rebound if the county wants growth. Additionally, the continued growth of jobs in the education services shows promise of a steady incline. With an increase in the education sector of the county, it can also be suggested that food and accommodation service industries will see

a gradual increase as well.

Another industry of projected growth is in the financial sector. The South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation suggests that credit intermediation positions are expected to grow 13.3% by 2020, suggesting an additional 2,340 jobs in the state. Similarly, jobs in nursing and residential care (14.9%) and hospitals (10.9%) are projected to grow in the state of South Dakota.

Table 4.6: Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector

Industry	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	290	265	225	217	205	183	216	192	216	197
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	50	57	42	52	41	52	47	47	49	63
Utilities	264	210	166	164	148	22	130	108	116	110
Construction	687	511	547	783	725	632	505	510	469	481
Manufacturing	4,370	4,327	5,130	5,429	5,471	5,172	4,740	4,633	3,956	3,827
Wholesale Trade	389	424	372	379	383	376	382	331	360	392
Retail Trade	1,541	1,519	1,628	1,635	1,667	1,524	1,568	1,505	1,517	1,460
Transportation and Warehousing	275	254	240	238	209	247	223	221	269	251
Information	160	169	162	160	161	172	170	168	171	172
Finance and Insurance	370	424	473	456	467	419	338	316	320	387
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	165	156	138	146	143	144	146	130	128	112
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	449	589	508	429	440	407	420	374	338	350
Management of Companies and Enterprises	140	120	112	111	116	115	92	79	85	102
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	209	295	206	198	169	235	213	258	327	245
Educational Services	3,339	3,242	3,182	3,023	684	2,405	2,412	2,575	2,920	2,865
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,404	1,486	1,475	1,400	1,388	830	1,241	1,393	1,378	1,446
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	326	209	192	171	218	174	197	163	168	126
Accommodation and Food Services	1,696	1,632	1,619	1,562	1,544	1,466	1,442	1,408	1,341	1,338
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	410	369	392	369	346	342	363	330	325	332
Public Administration	481	492	469	471	460	191	499	508	490	533

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013

When it comes to the workforce, almost half (49.5%) are between the ages of 30 and 54, with 19.1% being 55 or older and 31.5% 29 or younger (Census Bureau 2011). The average commute time to work is 14 minutes, 2.7 minutes shorter than the average commute time of South Dakota (ACS 2011). Forty-seven-point-three percent of the 17,015 jobs are less than 10 miles away from the workers residential locations.

Only 4.8% of job holders in Brookings County have less than high school completion, with 23.3% of the workers having some college or associates degree and 18.4% have a bachelor's degree or an advanced degree. However, 31.5% did not have available data on education statistics.

Table 4.7: Jobs by Worker Educational Attainment 2011

Education Attainment	Number of Employees	Share
Less than high school	809	4.8%
High school or equivalent, no college	3,758	22.1%
Some college or Associate degree	3,968	23.3%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	3,127	18.4%
Educational attainment not available (workers aged 29 or younger)	5,353	31.5%

c. Housing

Table 4.8 Brookings County Housing Units 2000 - 2013

Brookings County Housing Units 2000 - 2013																
		Units added →														
Townships	# of Housing Units 2000	2000-2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total added	Total
Afton	91	4	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	12	103
Alton	95	4	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	0	1	1	1	20	115
Argo	68	0	2	1	1	0	2	3	2	4	4	6	1	0	26	94
Aurora	126	0	2	3	1	3	3	1	0	0	1	3	3	1	20	147
Bangor	81	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	3	1	12	93
Brookings	168	7	1	2	0	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	0	24	192
Elkton	38	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	43
Eureka	76	1	1	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	14	90
Lake Hendricks	133	10	7	1	7	2	6	2	6	2	2	1	1	0	47	180
Lake Sinai	82	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	8	90
Laketon	165	7	3	6	4	4	11	12	1	0	2	1	1	0	52	217
Medary	552	13	13	4	10	5	8	3	3	1	4	3	5	3	75	627
Oak Lake	48	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	9	57
Oakwood	187	2	4	4	1	3	3	0	3	0	4	4	1	0	29	216
Oslo	84	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	10	94
Parnell	69	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	7	76
Preston	62	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	9	71
Richland	74	2	0	1	2	0	1	3	3	1	2	1	1	1	18	92
Sherman	74	1	1	3	1	0	1	0	3	1	1	2	0	0	14	88
Sterling	143	2	1	3	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	18	161
Trenton	152	2	1	0	5	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	15	167
Volga	156	9	5	3	3	4	1	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	36	192
Winsor	209	0	2	3	2	0	1	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	14	223
Township Total	2,933	73	53	44	46	33	52	38	32	17	30	32	28	15	494	3,502
Municipalities																
Brookings	6,490	132	129	118	138	192	140	224	230	315	81	94	244	120	2,157	8,647
Aurora	205	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	28	233*
Bruce	105	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	0	95*
Bushnell	32	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	n	na	na	0	32*
Elkton	267	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	19	286*
Sinai	54	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	0	52*
Volga	571	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	263	734*
White	198	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	0	195*

Sources: 2000 Brookings County Comprehensive Plan; Brookings County Building Permit Data: 2000 - 2010; cityofbrookings.org

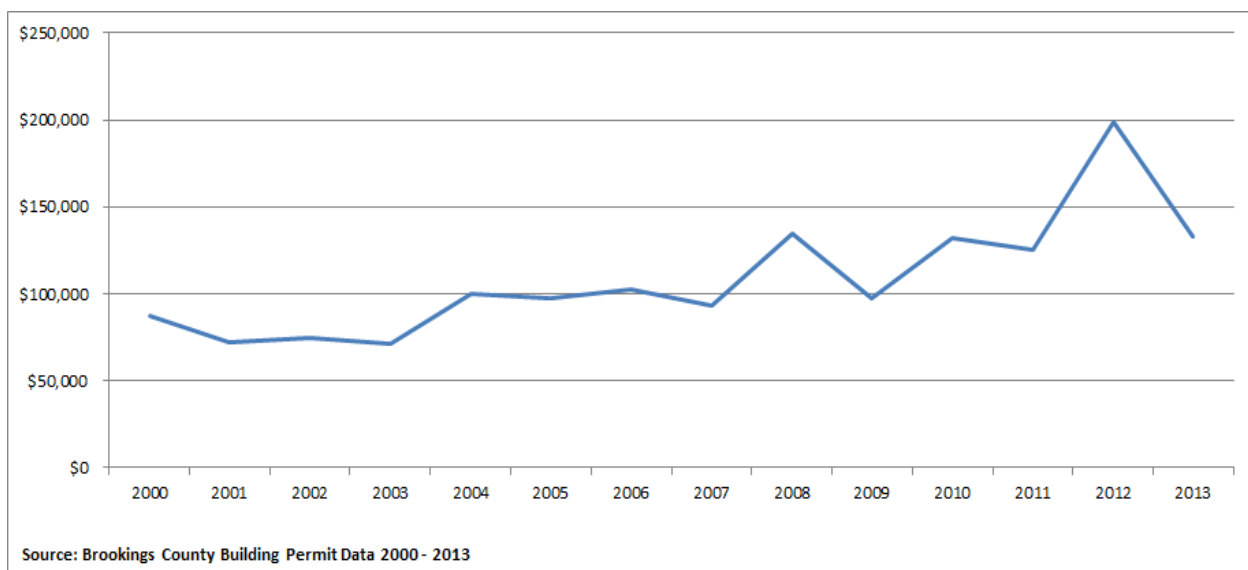
*Based on 2010 U.S. Census data

Overall, as seen in Table 4.8, extracted from Brookings County Planning and Zoning Building Permit Data, the townships of Laketon, Lake Hendricks, Medary and Volga have witnessed the largest increases of housing units since the year 2000. While the increase in Laketon township spiked in 2006 and 2007, the increases in both Laketon and Lake Hendricks can be primarily attributed to housing developments in close proximity to two of the largest lakes in the county,

Lake Poinsett and Lake Hendricks, respectively.

As the city of Brookings steadily expands to the south, housing development in the Medary township will experience increases. The largest housing unit increases in the townships of Medary and Volga, as well as the largest increases at the municipality level in the cities of Brookings and Volga, reflect the employment opportunities led by the manufacturing, education, and agricultural processing sectors that Brookings city and the South Dakota soybean processing plant near Volga provide. As the county moves forward in their planning and zoning endeavors, a consideration of how to adequately zone land use for housing developments in relation to previously zoned land use to the south and west of Brookings city must emerge.

Figure 4.9: Brookings County Median Construction Cost for Residence: 2000 - 2013



Since 2000, as seen in Figure 4.9, on the township level, Brookings County has witnessed a general increasing trend of the median construction cost for a residence over a thirteen year span.

Table 4.9: Brookings County Housing Occupancy Comparison: 2000 - 2010

	2000			2010	
		Percentage			Percentage
Total housing units	11,576	100		13,137	100
Occupied housing units	10,665	92.1		12,029	91.6
Vacant housing units	911	7.9		1,108	8.4
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	311	2.7		305	2.3
Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)	1.6	(X)		2.1	(x)
Rental vacancy rate (percent)	5.8	(X)		6.7	(x)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2000 & 2010

From 2000 to 2010, housing occupancy in Brookings County has remained generally consistent. The number of vacant housing units increased by 0.5% as shown in Table 4.9, implying a 0.5% decrease in occupied housing units. During this ten year time span, the number of houses for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use declined slightly by 0.4%. In both owner and renter housing units, the vacancy rate increased slightly by 0.5% and 0.9%, respectively.

Table 4.10: Brookings County Housing Tenure Comparison: 2000 - 2010

Housing Tenure for 2000 and 2010	HOUSING TENURE (2000)	Percentage	HOUSING TENURE (2010)	Percentage
Occupied housing units	10,665	100	12,029	100
Owner-occupied housing units	6,209	58.2	6,920	57.5
Renter-occupied housing units	4,456	41.8	5,109	42.5
Average household size of owner-occupied unit	2.65	(X)	2.56	(X)
Average household size of renter-occupied unit	2	(X)	2.09	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2000 & 2010

As shown in Table 4.10, from 2000 to 2010, Brookings County has seen a slight shift to more renter-occupied housing. During this ten year time span, the number of renter-occupied units have seen a 0.7% increase, implying a 0.07% decrease in the number of owner-occupied units. Correspondingly, the average household size of renter-occupied units increased by 0.9%, implying a 0.9% decrease in the average size of owner-occupied units.

Table 4.11: Brookings County Housing Units by Structure Type

	2000 U.S. Census		2010 - 2012 ACS 3-Year Estimates	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total housing units	11,576	100	13,306	100
UNITS IN STRUCTURE				
1-unit, detached	6,509	56.2	7,062	53.10%
1-unit, attached	249	2.2	567	4.30%
2 units	291	2.5	270	2.00%
3 or 4 units	384	3.3	347	2.60%
5 to 9 units	790	6.8	1,122	8.40%
10 to 19 units	868	7.5	1,145	8.60%
20 or more units	1,115	9.6	1,313	9.90%
Mobile home	1,366	11.8	1,480	11.10%

Source: Selected Housing Characteristics 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates;
U.S. Census Summary File: Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics 2000

Table 4.11 illustrates an estimated, proportional 3% decrease in the percentage of 1-unit structures detached from any other house over a ten to twelve year time span while noticeable increases in 1-unit, attached structures have emerged in Brookings County. This increase in 1-unit attached structures suggests an increase in "row houses (sometimes called

townhouses), double houses, or houses attached to nonresidential structures” as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Structures with 5 or more housing units have seen increases as well, indicating the steadily increasing development of larger-scale, multi-unit, apartment complexes within the county. This trend correlates with the increases in renter-occupied housing units as shown in Table 4.10.

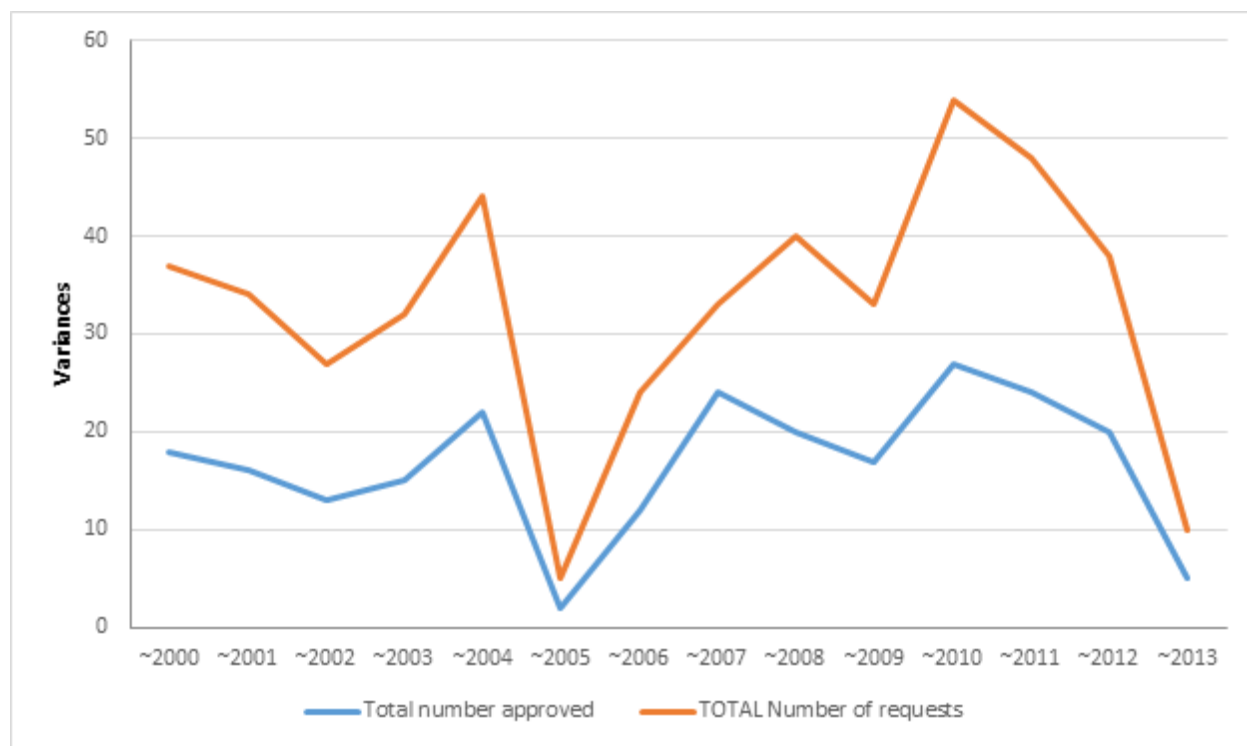
5. Data Analysis

a. Variances

As the Brookings Comprehensive plan is being assembled and it was imperative to examine the variance ordinances over the past 14 years. From 2002 to 2004, the level of requests and approval rose. Conversely, 2005 variance levels fell to 3 requests with only 1 approved. After 2005, variance request levels kept undulating with requests and approval levels peaking in the year 2010, when the levels peaked at

Moreover, after 2010 variance petitions began a sharp decline that still continues in 2013.

Figure 5.1: Brookings County Variances 2000 - 2013



Source: Brookings County records on variance applications

The chart demonstrates that it is probable that variance levels fluctuated based on either weather or economic conditions. In 2002, the levels of variance petitions fell slightly due to the drought the devastated wheat harvest, but soon rebounded with government farm subsidy bill. After 2002, the variance levels rose to 43 petitions which matched the next year harvest levels.

After three years of increasing variance requests, the numbers took a downward turn to the lowest levels ever in a decade. This is probably due to the United States slowing economy that was felt after the fiscal crunch in 2007-2010.

Table 5.1 -- Variance Applications, 2008-2013

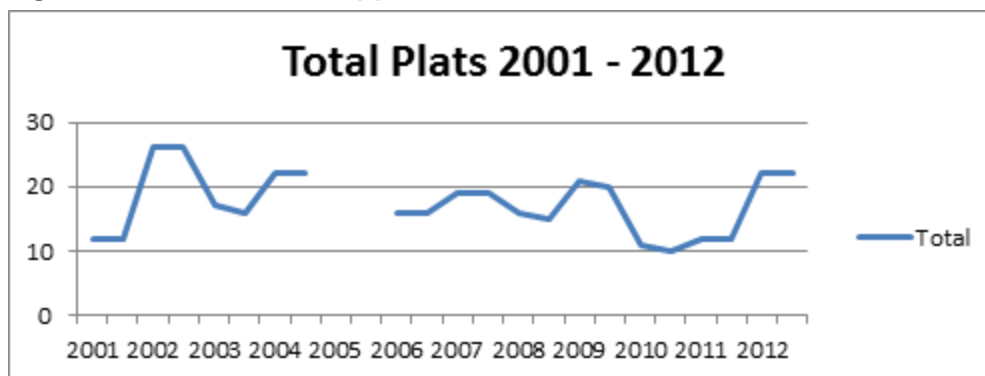
Total Approved	123
Total Not Approved	10
Grand Total	133
Percent Approved	92.4%

Source: Brookings County Planning & Zoning Database (2013)

b. Plats

There has been a somewhat steady trend for the approving of plats in Brookings County since 2001 with an average of 16.67 plats accepted a year, an acceptance rate of 94% (including some still pending for 2013). The current data set given has excluded the year 2006.

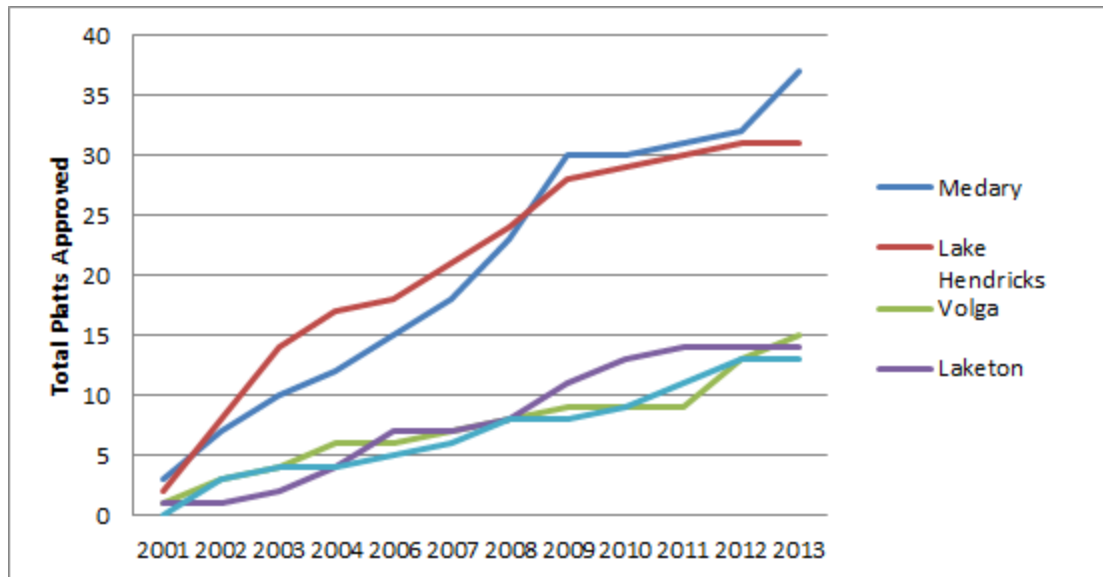
Figure 5.3 -- Total Plats Approved 2001-2012



Source: Brookings County Planning and Zoning Office 2013

Of the 21 townships, Medary (37) and Lake Hendricks (31) have had the most plats proposed and accepted since 2001. The current trends suggest that there has been more activity in these townships when it comes to platting land. With more development happening in Medary as Brookings expands, the trend indicates a steady increase, which also seems to be true for the Volga township since 2011. The Lake Hendricks Township currently has a slowing trend of plat proposals since its sharp increase in the early 2000s.

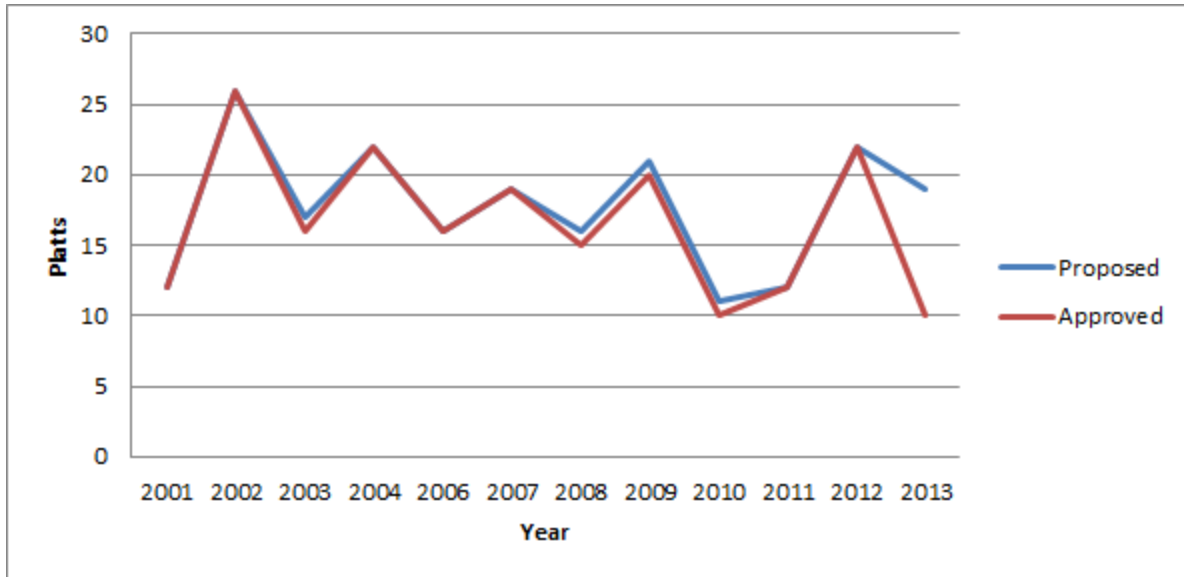
Figure 5.4: Approved Platts by Township



Source: Brookings County Planning and Zoning Office 2013

At the time of data collection, there were 9 decisions in 2013 to be decided. Judging on past trends of approval, it appears that all are likely to be accepted. While there has been no defining trends in accepting proposals, the numbers have been constant with a brief high in 2002 when 26 plats were proposed and accepted.

Figure 5.5: Total Platts Proposed and Approved

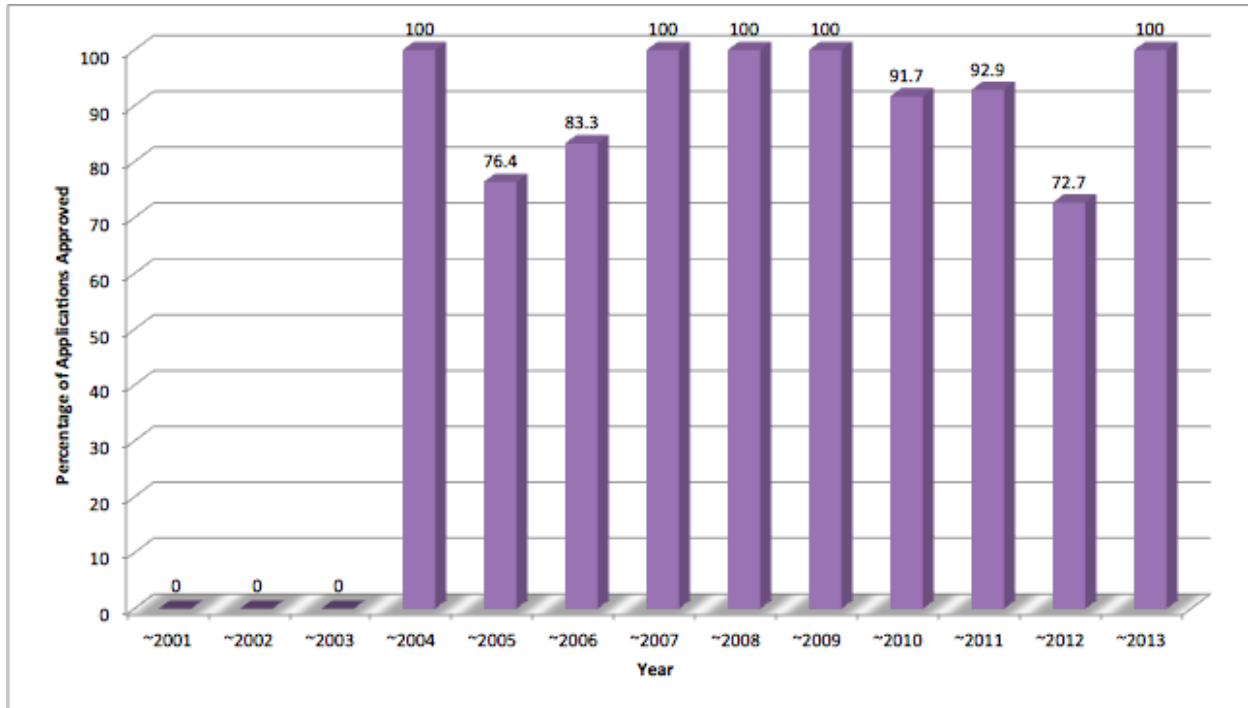


Source: Brookings County Planning and Zoning Office 2013

c. Conditional Uses

The Brookings County Planning and Zoning Board issues conditional use permits to allow residents to temporarily use land for purposes normally not allowed by the county's regulations. The pattern of conditional use permit approvals has not been consistent, with variation occurring on a year-to-year basis.

Figure 5.2 -- Percentage of Conditional Use Applications Approved, 2001-2013*



Source: Brookings County Planning & Zoning Database (2013)

*There were no conditional use applications in 2001, 2002, and 2003.

6. Meeting Reflections

a. Volga Meeting - 11/7/13

The Brookings County Planning & Zoning board conducted a meeting in Volga, South Dakota at the Volga Community Center on November 7, 2013 that served as the first in a series of “Munch, Mingle and Plan” meetings to gain input from residents of Volga regarding their concerns and recommendations in updating Brookings County’s comprehensive plan. This meeting proved well-attended, comprising 18 participants, including the Mayor of Volga. Residents viewed county law enforcement and educational institutions as key strengths in the county. Additionally, Volga residents expressed satisfaction of county land use for hunting, especially pheasant hunting.

During the meeting, one participant expressed a need for more consistent regulation and enforcement of penalties regarding building permits from the county. Generally, the most common concern emerging from residents was the need for alleviating the congestion of traffic on Highway 14 between Volga and Brookings as well as the general frequent need for the maintenance of Highway 14 roads within Brookings County.

b. White Meeting - 11/14/13

On November 14th, 2013, a community meeting was held in White to get an understanding of what Brookings County residents wanted to see in terms of development for their county. Fourteen people attended and a series of activities were conducted, including identifying assets

and deficiencies of the counties and ideal development moving forward.

During the meeting, transportation was discussed as having both assets and deficiencies. Participants felt that the overall transportation system in Brookings County was very well constructed and maintained. However, a few attendees felt that some township gravel roads were in bad shape due to various operations happening near them and that there was a lack of money and tax base for a proper repair. Acknowledging these limitations to a solution, the rest of the roads seemed to be in good condition according to the participants.

South Dakota State University was viewed as a strong asset to the county for the participants. Many things were cited including the location of an education hub inside the county, the jobs it provides, the businesses it attracts, and the cultural events it brings into the community. One challenge mentioned was the loss of shelter belts in the county for more available farmland. The loss was concerning for protection reasons, harmful agricultural practices and trends, and loss of wildlife habitat, especially pheasants.

One issue that was raised by the participants was the lack of involvement of the town when it comes to development and the planning and zoning commission in the county. One participant stressed that it was often the case where a decision was made at the county level with minimal input from community members, as they were expected to live with the decision.

c. Elkton Meeting - 11/19/13

On November 19th, 2013, Jeremiah and Rebecca attended the town hall meeting about the comprehensive plan and the direction of Brookings County in Elkton, South Dakota, a small hamlet located on the Minnesota border. The meeting, which was planned and run by the Brookings County Planning & Zoning Board, was set up to accommodate 20-30 people. Unfortunately, only one guest (not including county officials) -- a young woman from Aurora who was required to attend by her employer -- showed up at the meeting; several county officials and administrators also attended. Despite the dearth of participants, we still carried on the meeting as planned, leading our guests through the planned set of activities and discussion questions. Our respondent, who worked for an architectural firm in the city of Brookings, indicated that she was most concerned about the condition of roads within the county and the construction of nature trails and bike paths in townships adjacent to Brookings. In addition, she expressed a desire to see the county encourage the creation of more farmers' markets, local food stores, and community gardens.

After the meeting concluded, she thanked us for conducting a full presentation despite the lack of attendance, and stated that she might have interest in getting involved in community projects. All in all, I feel it was a productive meeting for the county and the residents within it, despite the lack of attendees. I am sure county officials will take into account the responses our attendee gave, and will continue to serve the area in line with constituents' needs and desires.

d. Brookings Meeting- 11/21/13

As part of our Rural Community class project, Anton and Fome were assigned to attend the Brookings Planning Committee Meeting on November 21 at 6 P.M. . We arrived some minutes earlier to help with set-up. While I helped put up posters, Anton helped participants check-in. The meeting proper started at 6.P.M. There were about 26 people in attendance consisting mainly of older folks with a couple younger folks.

The meeting was basically a focus group on Brookings City. As part of updating the current Comprehensive Plan, we wanted to know what people thought was working in Brookings and what areas should be improved upon. There were about 12 topics total on issues discussed ranging from, employment, education, and natural resources to transportation and housing. Primarily, our job was to record comments from the folks. For the most part, folks thought, easy access to locations without dealing with traffic was one of the reasons they liked Brookings, as well as the education (SDSU) and employment opportunities. However, they needed some of the roads fixed for better flow of traffic since Brookings seems to be increasing in population.

The highlight for us was when we had a fellow come up to us to commend our attendance in the meeting. He wished this class project could continue with subsequent students who would take the course. Overall, the meeting was well attended and participation was high.